

# Section 1

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## Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose of this Document

The purpose of this Seattle Biological Evaluation is to efficiently meet the Endangered Species Act (ESA) requirements for relatively simple or small City of Seattle capital projects and maintenance activities that require a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) permit.

A number of these projects occur within the waters of the United States, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Corps and are regulated under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and/or Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.<sup>1</sup> Under Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA, a biological evaluation is further required for projects or activities that may affect federally-listed threatened or endangered species or their critical habitat.

This Seattle Biological Evaluation replaces individual biological evaluations required or contracted under Section 7 for each separate capital project or maintenance activity performed by the City of Seattle.

### 1.2 Use of this Document

The Corps along with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Marine Fisheries Service, known jointly as the ‘Services,’ will use the Seattle Biological Evaluation to review permit applications for City of Seattle projects and maintenance activities that require a Corps permit and ESA Section 7 consultation.

City of Seattle project managers and other staff will use this document as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Waters of the United States is defined by 33 CFR 328. It refers to waters used for commerce and subject to tides, interstate waters including wetlands, intrastate waters such as lakes, rivers, streams, mudflats, sandflats, sloughs, natural ponds, impoundments of waters, tributaries and territorial seas.

- To submit a simplified permit application to the Corps by filling out an automated Specific Project Information Form (SPIF) developed for this Seattle Biological Evaluation. The SPIF is Appendix A of this document.
- To help decide on construction methods and maintenance activities. When using this Seattle Biological Evaluation, both the Corps and the Services require use of the applicable construction methods and conservation measures described in this document.

During the early concept phases of a project or maintenance activity, City staff should consult the Corps as to whether a permit is needed and if an ESA-listed species or their critical habitat may occur in the area. See the Seattle Public Utilities City of Seattle web page for permit information:

[http://www.seattle.gov/util/Engineering/Consulting\\_Resources/Permit\\_Coordination/index.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/util/Engineering/Consulting_Resources/Permit_Coordination/index.asp)

In addition to its intended use in Seattle projects and maintenance activities, this document could assist project managers with those projects that may need a Corps permit and ESA consultation but lie outside of the City. By adopting the construction methods and conservation measures described here, City staff may expedite the Corps' and the Services' review of individual consultations.

## 1.3 Organization of this Document

The Seattle Biological Evaluation is organized as follows:

- Preface: Quick reference for City of Seattle staff
- Section 1: Introduction
- Section 2: Permitting and Consultation
- Section 3: Description of Proposed Action: Methods
- Section 4: Conservation Measures
- Section 5: Status of the Species
- Section 6: Environmental Baseline
- Section 7: Effects of the Action
- Section 8: Cumulative Effects
- Section 9: Essential Fish Habitat
- Section 10: References.